

Message Text

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12

ACTION EA-10

INFO OCT-01 NEA-09 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-03 H-01

INR-07 L-02 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 RSC-01 PRS-01 SP-02

SS-15 USIA-06 IO-10 NIC-01 /075 W

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R 200736Z JAN 75

FM AMEMBASSY MANILA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 9945

INFO AMEMBASSY BANGKOK

AMEMBASSY CAIRO

AMEMBASSY JAKARTA

AMEMBASSY JIDDA

AMEMBASSY KUALA LUMPUR

AMEMBASSY TRIPOLI

AMEMBASSY SINGAPORE

CINCPAC

C O N F I D E N T I A L MANILA 0818

CINCPAC FOR POLAD

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINT, PINS, RP

SUBJECT: UPSURGE IN MINDANAO FIGHTING MAY REPRESENT COORDINATED
EFFORT BY MNLF

1. REPORTS REACHING MANILA INDICATE THAT MUSLIM REBELLION IS
HEATING UP AFTER LULL COINCIDENT WITH PILGRIMAGE SEASON.
INCREASED FIGHTING IS REPORTED FROM ALL THREE SECTORS OF
MUSLIM INSURGENCY (SULU, COTABATO AND LANA O AREAS.) FOLLOW-
ING IS BRIEF OUTLINE OF RECENT ACTION IN DECLINING ORDER OF
IMPORTANCE:

A. JOLO MASSACRE. BY FAR MOST SERIOUS EPISODE WAS JAN. 14
AMBUSH AND ANNAHILATION OF CONSTABULARY (PC) PATROL ON
ROAD NEAR MAIMBUNG, SEAT OF SULTANATE OF SULU ON JOLO IS-
LAND. AT LEAST 40 TROOPERS, BATTALION COMMANDER AND THREE
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OTHER OFFICERS WERE KILLED. WIRE SERVICES HAVE REPORTED THIS

INCIDENT (WHICH HAS BEEN CONFIRMED TO DEFATT BY HIGH MILITARY SOURCES) BUT AS USUAL NOTHING PUBLISHED LOCALLY.

B. COTABATO SHELLING. THERE IS INCREASED FIGHTING IN PIG-KAWAYAN AREA NEAR COTABATO (APPARENTLY A RESPONSE TO GOVERNMENT OPERATION) WITH REPORTED HEAVY USE OF MORTARS BY INSURGENTS. ALSO REBELS HAVE REPORTEDLY LANDED A FEW MORTAR ROUNDS NEAR MILITARY HEADQUARTERS IN COTABATO CITY.

C. MARAWI CITY INCIDENT. ON MORNING OF JAN. 14 THERE WAS AN ATTACK ON CAMPUS RADIO STATION AND ISLAMIC INFORMATION CENTER AT MINDANAO STATE UNIVERSITY. THERE WERE NO CASUALTIES BUT BOTH FACILITIES WERE DAMAGED. MEANWHILE THERE ARE CONTINUING REPORTS OF HEAVY MARANAO MUSLIM REBEL CONCENTRATION NORTH OF KOLAMBUGAN (DIFFERENT AREA OF SAME PROVINCE).

2. ALTHOUGH NONE OF THIS HAS BEEN MENTIONED IN LOCAL PRESS WORD IS SPREADING AMONG PUBLIC (ESPECIALLY RE JOLO INCIDENT WHICH HAS BEEN A NASTY SHOCK FOR THE PHILIPPINE MILITARY SINCE THIS REGION HAS BEEN RATHER QUIET FOR SOME TIME.)

3. COMMENT: REBEL ACTIVITY HAS COINCIDED WITH EXECUTIVE SECRETARY MELCHOR VISIT TO JIDDA FOR TALKS WITH MORO NATIONAL LIBERATION FRONT (MNLF) REPS. IT POSSIBLE MNLF SEEKING TO DEMONSTRATE TO GOP ITS ABILITY TO STRIKE WHEN AND WHERE IT CHOOSES IN ORDER TO STRENGTHEN ITS HAND IN THESE TALKS. HOWEVER, EMBASSY HAS NO EVIDENCE TO SUPPORT SUCH CAREFUL ORCHESTRATION AND SOME REBEL ACTIVITY HAS DEFINITELY BEEN IN RESPONSE TO GOVERNMENT ATTACKS.
SULLIVAN

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